



And A Church was Built



"I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go into the house of the Lord."

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Psalm 122: -1

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list.
Those noble Norse Pilgrims of a half-century ago, who came to help tame a pathless prairie land and whose love of adventure and desire to explore filled their imagination with Gleams of Golden Promise of things to be and caused them to enlist in the front line in the opening of a New Frontier.

Without their courage and endurance these fertile plains would still be an Unplowed Wilderness.

The first days were Days of Fulfillment. Perhaps these distant plains are more lovely and fruitful than any of the visions of those Pioneers -- yet for many of them it was not for their eyes to see nor their hands to touch. For them only to push the frontier a little further westward and to hold their Great Golden Dreams and pass them on to their sons and daughters as a Grand Heritage.

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This little church history has been written around the records of the old church book now over 50 years old. Intentions are to preserve at least, a few mementos of a glorious half-century in which this part of the Canadian west was settled.

Additional information has been obtained from various sources and we are indebted to the oldtimers in the district for their kind help in recalling events and graciously supplying information.

We regret the history is not as complete as we would like it to be and if there are errors we offer our humble apologies.

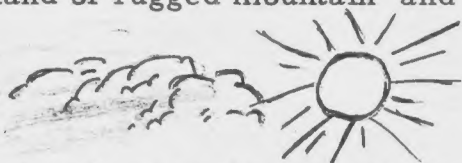
The Committee in charge of arrangements for the Jubilee Anniversary were Gordon Joel and Thoralf Sogge.

History committee: Mrs. Wm. Berndt and Mrs. J. Krogan.

Tucked away between other abodes in the little village of Elbow, there stands today a small church, its steeple towering high against the blueness of the sky. Within its interior history is written on the walls, the old wooden pews, the chancel and the framed motto inscribed with the names of those who took part in World War II.

Its humble beginning as recorded in the faded pages of the old church book, originated in the heart of a little Norwegian settlement that came into being on the sparsely settled Saskatchewan prairie Fifty Golden years ago.

Constituting this settlement were only a few families to begin with, most of whom became charter members of the church at its organization in the year 1908. From various parts of America they came and across the seas, from a distant land of rugged mountain and placid fjords.



It was shortly after the turn of the stormy and eventful 20th century that they came - to the tune of thousands of creaking wagons across the plains. The blood of their Viking ancestry flowed rich in their veins and like their forebears of old they were blessed with a vision and a yen to explore the unknown.

Onto these level prairies where tall grasses had waved undisturbed for centuries they came - the seekers - the builders - the pioneers of yesteryear.

Sturdy and self-reliant, with few tools, strong hands and a simple faith in God their only possessions, they came to establish homes and security on an expanse replete with land and sky spreading towards the horizons.

But, more than that, as they turned the sod and cast seed into the virgin soil they also planted the word of God in their midst and like a "beacon on a hill" it provided guidance for their souls as straight and true as the furrows they made.

One bright, spring morning in the year 1903, Christopher Martinson stood on a promintory overlooking the mighty Saskatchewan river and decided this was his stopping place. He had come across leagues of miles from the state of Iowa, across the Dakotas and on into the Great Plains of Western Canada. Like his counterparts of many creeds from many lands, who streamed westward with the tide of immigration, he was not following the dip of a rainbow, but was in earnest search of a bit of land to call his own, where he might build and where his roots might take hold and go deep.

As he gazed about him he saw land and more land dotted with settlers shacks. Enthusiastically, he envisioned the open range dwindle before plowed fields and pasture fences. Although a man past middle life, he was destined to live to see his dreams fulfilled beyond expectations. He lived to be 101½ years old passing on to his reward in the year 1937. His old home built by himself of lumber was a large house at that time and still stands about 2 miles north of Elbow, a silent monument to a glamorous past. It also claims the distinction of being the first post office and store in the community. Anna Martinson was the first post mistress.

Davidson, 30 miles away, was the main town of provisions. There, too, ended the steel.

A year after the Martinson's came, the first Lutheran minister arrived practically within hailing distance - a mere 40 miles away.

The people around Elbow, then known as River-view, had been without any religious service during this

Mrs. Anna Martinson
First Post Office
Mistress



time and when word was received that Rev. I. Hustvedt had come to Hanley, Sask. Anna Martinson wrote him regarding holding services in their home.

Rev. Hustvedt came to Canada, commissioned by the Lutheran Free Church of America in the year 1904 and during his two years of ministering on the raw prairie he did not spare himself. His field of Labor included the districts of Hanley, Govan, Strongfield and Elbow. He worked Sundays and week-days conveying Christian teachings, travelling many weary miles with horse and buggy.

There were no roads. Only a pattern of Indian and buffalo trails from the 90's marked the wide expanse.

When Rev. and Mrs. Hustvedt left Canada in 1906 they left an emptiness. People missed them greatly. There were no ministers then until in the year 1907 when Rev. W.M. Hagen came to Canada. He made his home at Craik, Sask., arriving there in April but towards the fall of the same year he moved to Elbow as this point was most central in his field of labor. He also was sent out by the L.F.C. During his stay here, Rev. Hagen organized several congregations, including Trinity, at Hanley in Dec. 1907; Bethlehem, Hawarden, in 1909; Bethel at Elbow in 1908 and Zion Sandhills, east of Elbow in 1907.

Like Rev. and Mrs. Hustvedt, the Hagen's did not spare themselves and worked amid the most primitive conditions. Their home - a prairie parsonage - was built of sod. It was situated on land given by C.O. Ganes on his farm east of Elbow, and was warm in winter and cool in summer. Its interior decorations were a far cry from the lovely pink and terra-cotta jobs now being turned out by builders bent on glamorizing the old west. But its humble interior boasting five rooms partitioned off by use of sheets and large windows through which the sunlight shone on the wooden floor, radiated a friendliness and hospitality all its own. Perhaps it was the



simple, homey things like a shining kettle over an open fire, or the light of a cheery coal oil lamp at a frosted window or perhaps it was a white cloth on a crude homemade table with home made bread fresh from the oven and the bible lying face down that exuded the homey and welcoming atmosphere, perhaps it was mainly that simple common touch that endeared the Hagen's to the people and made their home a haven of light and cheer.

Around this little sod house Margaret and Leonard played together and there Kristofer and Waldemar were born, and there the Hagen's shared and toiled, suffered, wept and prayed, all the while ministering to others. With other rugged pioneers they stood fast against the hardships provoked by the elements, when prairie fires, famine, cloudbursts, grasshoppers and blizzards bore down upon the land.

But it was not all failures and tragedies -there were compensations - rich moments - when like shining shafts of light, burdens were lifted and there was laughter and song and thanksgiving!

During those first weeks of autumn in the year 1907 meetings were held in homes and the River View school. Later on before the church was built, meetings were held in the Elbow public school and the sum of fifty cents was paid the school board for each meeting. This was in the year 1911. However, that first year attempts were made to organize the present Bethel church but it wasn't until the turn of the new year (1908) that official steps were taken.

This historic meeting was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Nils Bunes on the 15th of Feb.

The following officers were the first to be elected in the Bethel congregation - President, Rev. Hagen; Vice-pres., Nils Bunes; Secretary, Martin Nelson;



Treasurer, Emil Sjoli.

Trustees: J.P. Berndt, Kaspar Hope, Chas. Olson.

Deacons: C.O. Ganes, Nils Bunes, Martin Nelson.

Those who recorded their names in the church book on the day of organization were the following; Martin Nelson, Nils Bunes, Chas. Olson, Emil Sjoli, B. Transrud, Enok Torbergson, C.O. Ganes, Hans Bjorgan, Anton Medby and J.P. Berndt.

On the same page at later dates until 1910 were the following signatures; Kaspar Hope, C.O. Medby, M.B. Martinson, Julius Joel, Rikka Sogge, C.S. Martinson, Julius Nelson, Kristian Arneson, John Elvebakken Marie Sjoberg.

With the forming of the congregation and the installation of Rev. Hagen as pastor the members of the church were spurred on to action. Before much time had passed plans were astir to hold bible vacation school with Mr. Odin Jacobson as teacher. This school was held in various homes and later in schools and the church. For one lone season in the early years it was held in a granary on the Andrew Chell place northwest of Elbow. Hither trooped the boys and girls from the four corners of the prairie in the days of pinafores, tousled heads and bare feet.

From the west came the Anton Medby's and Bjorgan's, from the south the C.O. Medby's and the Torbergson's and from the east came the Bunes's and the Nelson's, Chas. Olson's and others. Mr. Jacobson, who was an able teacher from Norway and made his home at Loreburn, conducted the teaching of the bible as well as the three R's. The granary and the one room given as a classroom in homes became the halls of learning for these pioneer children for a certain period each year.

The grating of pencils on slates accompanied by the hum of lessons being taught in the A.B.C., catechism or other classes filled the air during the biggest part of the day. Their teacher was also a lover of music and derived much pleasure in gathering the singers in classes about him at an old-fashioned organ. The hymns from the "Freds Basunen" would take on new spiritual meaning as voices in harmony rang out to the rafters. Across the years in memory, once again one hears those sacred Norwegian songs like "Seilende paa havets bolger" and "Her kommer dine arme smaa" and many others. Other teachers of Vacation Bible School were Mr. C.O. Ganes and Mrs. W. Martinson.

With the years church work progressed. The Ladies Aid was formed along with Sunday School and Young Peoples Society. In later years a choir, Mission Circle, Mission Band and the Bible Camp erected jointly with neighboring congregations came into being. The Mission Circle was begun in the 30's by Mrs. S. Rue (nee Margaret Hagen) and is still active today.

But in the early years foundations were laid and men and women accustomed to gracious living in other climes brought with them talents and ingenuity to use in a primitive land. In 1910 Mrs. Rikka Sogge came to Elbow and with her she brought the gift of music. She became the church's first organist, a position she held until the year 1922. Since then other able organists have served including Thoralf Sogge, Carl Medby, Myron Nelson, Mrs. J. Hovdestad, Shirley Vallevand and Mrs. Mel Langager.

Special mention is made of Myron Nelson, who in a faithful and unassuming manner served as organist for 24 years. Down through the years he did not shirk his duty but was present to give of his musical talent at Sunday worship or services. Tribute is also paid to Mrs. J. Hovdestad who during the time she made her home at Elbow, was instrumental in bringing about the reality of the purchase of a new Hammond Organ in the



year 1953. She was an able choir leader and when it became evident that the old organ was beyond repair the idea of starting a fund for a new one became an enthusiastic enterprise. In shorter time than anticipated the large sum of money required to purchase one was realized. This was done through means of holding concerts in other districts and at home and also by means of donations by members of the congregation.

Thus, silently and unobtrusively, history goes on, steadily weaving her tapestry and in regard to the little settlement on the lone Saskatchewan prairie it reveals that the fixed purpose was to plant the word of God in its midst and like a candle burning bright, let it shine forth over the years.

In the year 1912 the church was built. In 1911 a committee of three, namely Anton Medby, C. Martinson and J. Joel were elected to locate a suitable place for a church to be built and given authority by the congregation to buy lots where and when they thought best. At the next meeting held on Sept. 24th, 1911 a report was given that two lots in Elbow had been bought from the C.P.R. for the sum of \$137.50. Later on the C.P.R. decided to give these lots to the church. A carpenter by the name of W. Sanglot was employed to do the building and his plan was sent to the T. Eaton Co., at Winnipeg to ascertain the cost of Lumber.

Meetings were held and discussion took place regarding the raising of funds. There were obstacles and sometimes there were differences but these were overcome and gradually the vision of those early Elbow pioneers began to take concrete form. Though the church's exterior was completed in 1912 and excavation made under it for a furnace it was not until a few years later that it was entirely finished inside

and out. But it was ever in the hearts of its people. They gave of their time and money as they could and little by little necessities were added. A full basement was made, a different lighting system was put in and painting was done.



But in those early days many beginnings had to be made and the question of a parsonage arose. After Rev. Hagen left in 1910, Rev. H. G. Storebo was installed as pastor. He made his home with Mr. and Mrs. C. Arneson on their farm south of Elbow.

He served the congregation until 1916. In 1917 Rev. J. O. Reitan came. At that time the manse had been built at its present location.

In 1908 a place for a cemetery was obtained from Mr. Conrad Wick and was located on his farm about three miles north of Elbow.

In looking over the various records of the old church book we note with interest the names of first baptized, confirmed and married by Rev. Hagen.

Myrtle Ganes was the first infant to be baptized and the date is June 22nd 1907. A day later on June 23rd, Angell Medby and Adena Nelson were baptized.

On the first page of confirmants the names of Halsten Bjorgan, Caroline Torbergson, Ingeborg Medby, Marie Bunes, Anna Bunes and Amanda Jomeen is written and the recorded date is June 21, 1908. The first couple to be married at Elbow by Rev. Hagen, were Hannah Berndt and Martin Martinson on Nov. 27, 1907.

Over the years two World Wars have intervened. During the last war 22 sons and one daughter wore the colors - some fought in the battle zone of

Germany but miraculously all returned safely to their homes. Two sons - Leonard Sogge and Gordon Hope have been ordained as ministers.

For the most part they are farmers - the second and third generations. Their lot is much easier than were those of their ancestors for there is a never-ending stream of better goods, tools and conveniences. Yet the old days continue to hold a fascination that will not be surpassed.



Delightful tales or incidents come cropping up and among them we hear about Grandma Bjorgan and Mrs. Anton Medby walking to a meeting at K. Hope's each carrying a dish of romme-grot but when they reached Conrad Wick's place they learn the meeting has been cancelled so they continue on to C.O. Gane's to share the treat with them.

The distance of the return trip would be nearly 18 miles, but walking which today is fast becoming a lost art, was taken as a matter of course then.

Another story tells of Anton Medby sleeping in a hammock in the open at night while his sod house was being built, and of C.O. Medby driving to church for a baptismal in his family, with oxen, and when the time came to go home one of the animals was found missing. It had broken loose and gone home.

In the early days fish were plentiful in the Saskatchewan river and the Medby's who were fishermen from the sea coast of Norway would cast nets in the deep part of the flowing waters with the aid of a row boat. Often in the early morning hours on a summers day a fine catch would be drawn from waters that were often as clear and blue as those spoken of in the Lake of Galilee when Peter fished there.

Amusing incidents too, abounded in those long

ago days and one is related of the occasion when Pastor Storebo wanted his buggy wheels greased , he would always stop in at Sogge's knowing that Thoralf would do it for him.

Other stories of the past speaks of pioneer recreation, of going to a Laddies Aid or picnic atop of a load of new-mown hay and singing on the way. Another tells of a threshing crew at Jacobson's piling into a hay rack on a Sunday morning and going to church.

And so goes some of the stories of the lighter side of our prairie pioneer, whose lot it was to grapple with the problem of providing shelter without timber, water without springs and warmth without anything to burn.

To-day family stories are being proudly relived. But the era of the pioneer is little evidenced. The sod buildings that once were the center of an embryonic industry have weathered away to become only broken mounds of soil upon the landscape, but the light of the little Bethel church, whose spiritual foundation was first laid in the rugged hearts of men and women, so long ago, still shines steadily and radiantly over the wideness of the plains.

To-day we are the fortunate heirs of this great past.

To-morrow, out of this heritage of hope, courage, vision and faith in God, together the oldtimers and the youngsters of the Bethel church can push on to new horizons of glorious achievement.



The Peaceful Years

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

MR. & MRS. JULIUS JOEL celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on Sunday, July 26th at the Bethel Lutheran Church at 2:30 p.m. where they were surrounded by their many relatives and friends. After a short program everyone was invited to the church parlors where a lunch was served by the ladies of the town and a social hour was enjoyed.

On July 28th (the actual wedding day) a second celebration was held in the church dining room, when the family and near relatives partook of a sumptuous banquet, with the ladies of Bethel Mission Circle in charge of arrangements.

Mr. & Mrs. Joel were married at the bride's home, east of Loreburn, Sask. on July 28th, 1909 after which they took up farming 4 miles east of Elbow, where they lived, and raised their family of seven sons and two daughters. They retired to their present home in Elbow in 1949.

Grandma and Grandpa Joel (as they are affectionately called) are both in good health and are still very active. They are known for their hospitality and their home is a place where friends and relatives both, like to visit.

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MR. & MRS. CHRISTIAN ARNESON celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on Sunday, June 30th, 1957. After the morning service at the Lutheran church there was a presentation of a gift from the community and congregation followed by a "come and go" tea in the afternoon, held in their honour at the home of their daughter and son-in-law, Mr. & Mrs. J. Vallevand.

The happy couple were recipients of a large



En prestebolig i pionertiden



FIRST ROW:
SOD HOUSE

SECOND ROW:
Grandma Bjorgan , 89 years
Mr. Bunes & new car bought in 1918

THIRD ROW:
Farming by Oxen in early days
Bunes Horse Outfit in the '20's



Nils Bunes family in 1904. The year they
came to Elbow



Mr. & Mrs. Martin Nelson



Mr. & Mrs. Martin Martinson
(First couple to be married
by Rev. Hagen)



Mr. Odin Jacobson



J. P. Berndt



Jules & Judrun Joel in 1909



Mr. & Mrs. Medby



Mr. & Mrs. Ganes



FIRST ROW:-

Mr. & Mrs. Emil Sjoli (2)
Mr. & Mrs. C. O. Ganes & family)

SECOND ROW:-

Mr. & Mrs. H. Bjorgan

THIRD ROW:-

Mrs. Rikka Sogge
First Country School House

number of congratulatory messages, cards and gifts. The many relatives and friends called during the afternoon and evening.

Both Mr. & Mrs. Arneson were born in Ojer, Gudbrandsdalen, Norway - Mr. Arneson on September 3, 1878 and Mrs. Arneson on December 1, 1881. They came to this country in 1907 and were the first couple to be married by the newly arrived minister, Rev. W. M. Hagen, the date was June 25, 1907.

In June 1908 the Arneson's moved to their homestead, one mile south of Elbow. Their home was a one toom shack, hot in summer and in the winter the invading blasts were sufficient to rustle the hair. Their barn was a cave in a hill and housed three horses and a cow or two. The main implement was a walking plow.

In 1919 the Arneson's moved from their home on the hill to a farm east of Elbow, a lovely bungalow type home.

In 1947 they moved to town where they live in a pretty home made lovely by the growing of flowers. The years have been kind to them and their outlook on life is serene. Anyone with perturbed days should call on them for their recipe of growing old contentedly!

They have one daughter, six grandchildren, and nine great grandchildren.

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PIONEER REVIEWS EARLY DAYS

On behalf of the Bethel Ladies Aid a lovely wall plaque and a corsage of flowers was presented to Mrs. Johanna Nelson on the occasion of her 80th birthday. She was also the recipient of many other lovely cards and gifts.

Born in Madison County, Minn. in the year 1878, married in 1897, she came to Canada, seven years later

in 1904.

Mrs. Nelson recalled many memories about her first years homesteading. The thrill of their first house, the hardships, the fires, blizzards were all worthwhile.

Both Mr. & Mrs. Nelson were active in Church work, Mr. Nelson being Bethel Lutheran Church's first congregational secretary. A family of ten were born to them, six of whom are living. Mr. Nelson passed away in the 20's.

Mrs. Nelson was one of the first members when the Ladies Aid was organized over half a century ago, and is still actively engaged in the work.

She resides on the original homestead with one daughter and two sons. In this comfortable house she reminisces of the past and looks forward with confidence to a bright future for her beloved Saskatchewan.

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MRS. INGLEBORG BJORGAN

"Grandma" Bjorgan was born in Holtalen, Norway, in the year 1862, one of 12 children. She married there and at an early age emigrated to America. Mr. and Mrs. Bjorgan lived in the United States for a few years, then moved to Canada to homestead near Elbow. Here they resided until the death of Mr. Bjorgan in 1936. Grandma has since lived with her daughters at Demaine, Sask., leaving at intervals to visit with other members of her family.

Grandma chuckles as she reminisces over the years when she lived on the homestead and would drive to town with old "Susie" and the buggy. "Speed wasn't the main requisite in those days, but often when we were almost scorched by the summer sun, caught in a downpour of rain, or a snowstorm, we could have

done with a little more 'giddap'!" In those days it behooved everybody on homesteads to turn their hands to any good chore that would add to the family purse. Grandma has been turning a hand all her life. She has worked as hired help on neighboring farms in addition to doing her own work, had raised a family and churned tons of butter. Every Saturday, butter and egg crates were packed into the old buggy and taken to town, to be traded for groceries, always an event of the week.

A big party had been planned for her birthday, but owing to a cold which she contracted during the holidays, it was put off with only the immediate members of the family calling on her throughout the day. She was up and around and enjoyed the many gifts and cards given to her. A lovely birthday cake baked by her granddaughters was presented to her with her name and best wishes colorfully engraved on top. After refreshments, color pictures were snapped of grandma and the family of whom all were present, except a daughter, Mrs. Downey.

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ELBOW BETHEL'S 50th ANNIVERSARY

In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Bethel Lutheran Church at Elbow, July 3rd, 1957 was set aside by the congregation to praise and worship this wonderful event. The committee in charge planned a program and service in the morning followed by dinner and a fellowship hour. In the afternoon and evening, a joint gathering with Skudesness congregation of Loreburn, who were also celebrating their golden jubilee, was held at Elbow Bible Camp site near the river.

Invitations had been sent out to all former pastors and former members, now living elsewhere, and visitors attended from Alberta, U.S.A. and Saskatchewan, filling the church where microphones had been set up so those who were outside or down in the base-

ment could hear the anniversary message.

With Rev. F.T. Dable of Laporte, Minn., recently of Elbow, as chairman the program began at 10 a.m. and the opening hymn was "The Church's One Foundation". Organist was Mrs. Mel Langager and pianist was Mrs. J. Wankel.

Gordon Joel gave the welcoming address and this was followed by the reading of the church's history by Curly Ganes. A vocal duet was sung by Pastors Leonard Sogge and Gordon Hope, sons of members of the congregation. A greeting was then given by Rev. K. Gjestifjeld of Minnesota, who served this parish in the '20's. A vocal duet was then given by Rev. and Mrs. R. Snipstead of Saskatoon.

The anniversary message was given by Dr. Kristofer Hagen of Minneapolis, Minn., son of the church's first pastor, whose topic was "Fifty Years of God's Eternal Grace". Dr. Hagen, whose time was limited, made the trip by means of the airways in order to once again visit his place of birth, and join in the reunion of the church of his father, the late Rev. W.M. Hagen, organized 50 years ago. His mother Mrs. Christine Hagen, was also present having arrived earlier in the company of a daughter, Margaret, and husband, Rev. S. Rue, and girls, all residing in Minnesota. Rev. Rue was also a former pastor of the Bethel-Skudesness parishes.

A solo was rendered by Edwin Joel and greetings were given by Rev. L. Sogge and Rev. G. Hope. In closing, the hymn, "Lord, Bestow On Us Thy Blessing" was sung.

Luncheon was served in the basement and at 1:30 a fellowship hour was held, ably presided over by Miss Mildred Joel of Minneapolis.

The joint meeting at the camp was attended by an overflow crowd. Dr. Ivar Alson of Minneapolis,

formerly of Skudesness, was chairman for the afternoon program. Musical numbers were rendered, written messages from those unable to attend were read and oral messages of praise and thanksgiving abounded in memory of the fifty wonderful, golden years being dedicated by both churches to the Glory of God.

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The first pioneer members of the Ladies Aid when it was organized were the following: Mrs. W.M. Hagen, Mrs. M. Nelson, Mrs. C.O. Ganes, Miss Anna Martinson, Mrs. C.S. Martinson, Mrs. N. Bunes, Mrs. K. Hope.

The records of the first Ladies Aid meetings have been lost. Its constitution then was carefully written down in the Norwegian language and meetings and church services were conducted in Norwegian. Over the years a gradual changeover has taken place until now the English language is used for all services.

Officers of the 1957 Ladies Aid were the following: Mrs. W. Berndt, Pres.; Mrs. C. Vallevand, Vice-pres.; Mrs. J. Krogan, secretary; Miss Mabel Nelson, treasurer; Sunshine committee, Mrs. J. Vallevand and Mrs. C. Vallevand; Auditors, Mrs. A. Millsten and Mrs. C. Vallevand.

Members of the Ladies Aid in 1957 were as follows: Mrs. W. Berndt, Mrs. C. Vallevand, Mrs. K. Knutson, Mrs. A. Millsten, Mrs. G. Hundebby, Mrs. J. Joel, Mrs. J. Nelson, Miss Mabel Nelson, Miss Signe Medby, Mrs. J. Vallevand, Mrs. C. Arneson, Miss Thora Bunes, Mrs. Hal Bjorgan, Mrs. T. Sogge, Mrs. J. Krogan, Mrs. S. Benson.

Officers of the Congregation 1957: There was no minister from the fall of 1956 to July 1957. Vice-president Gordon Joel; Secretary, T.A. Joel;

Treasurer, Norman Ganes. Trustees: Gordon Joel, Art Knutson, R. Hundebj. Deacons: Art Vallevand, N.A. Ganes, Edwin Joel. Ushers: John Vallevand, R. Hundebj, Dennis Sogge and G. Knutson. Sexton: John Krogan, Assistant, Geo. Medby. Sunday School Supt. Edwin Joel, Assistant, Mrs. W. Berndt. Organist, Mrs. Mel Langager. Pianist, Mrs. J. Wankel. Music committee, Mrs. Ed Knutson and Mrs. O. Lillemo. Parsonage committee, Trustees. Mission Circle Pres. Mrs. T. Joel. L.L. Pres., R. Hundebj.

The congregation has been especially blessed with laymen who have stood Tall in its gatherings. To them was given the Gifts to preach His Word and they have used part of their time for this purpose.

Included among these are Kaspar Knutson, Norris Ganes, George Hope, Joe Hovdestad and C.O. Ganes.

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The Luther League executive Committee of the Canada District in their 1944 meeting, felt strongly the need of holding and winning the youth of our church for Christ.

In the Bible Camp movement they saw the possibilities of bringing our young people together in wholesome Christian fellowship. Since that first meeting the Bible Camp has been the responsibility of the Luther League Federation of the Canada District.

Three congregations, Bethel, Bethlehem and Skudesness, numbering about 400 souls assume the responsibility of this Bible Camp which at the present time is, in the words of Prof. G. Loken, "nestling amongst the hills within the elbow of the South Saskatchewan River. The Camp is just off No. 45 Highway, the gravel road being accessible for travel under all conditions. The site is beautifully wooded with huge

willows, poplars, maples and saskatoon trees. There is ample level playground space and room for more cabins and camp buildings. This site on the large elbow of the river is a beauty spot affording panoramic views of rolling hills sweeping down to meet the wide expanse of the waters of the South Saskatchewan. Nearby are springs and beaver dams. Juicy saskatoons are ever popular with the campers. Swimming in the river is not permitted but showers are provided. Plans are being made for a paddling pool and swimming pool to be built.

The camp is well equipped and planned. There is a large combination dining room and kitchen. Water is brought to the kitchen by a force pump which pumps water from a spring. A hot-water front in a large stove keeps a tank full of hot water. Small cabins are available to faculty members. There are large, comfortable dormitories equipped with beds - one for the boys and one for the girls. A large circular tent was used for classes and preaching service before the present auditorium was built in 1954. The whole camp is lit with electric lights - power being supplied from a 110 volt generator. Swings, teeter-totter, and large sand bins provided for the smaller folks. There is a fine ball diamond and a volleyball court.

Teamwork of large groups of men has done all the building and clearing. Plans for each year are made by a representative board which appoints the necessary officials and selects the faculty for each year.

No fees are charged anyone, but donations of food or money are received. Every year there is a large cash surplus.

This camp reaches out to all ages. A special teacher is provided for the small children. Then there is an intermediate class for those below confirmation. During the afternoon recreational periods, a

Bible class, is provided for the older folk and visitors to the camp."

Prof. G. Loken.

This camp was first started in the year 1945 and the site was on the Lutheran church ground at Skudesness, near Loreburn. Tents were erected as dormitories. Pastors Evenson and P. Overlid were teachers. Pastor Alfred Knutson served as evangelist. In 1946 the camp was moved to its present location.

From this beginning with an enrollment of approximately seventy (70), the Bible Camp of the Canada District has grown until the year of the dedication service (1954) when the long-hoped for auditorium was built, the enrollment reached 160 campers.

The Bible Camp committee work almost incessantly to care for the details of the camp. Among those who deserve special mention for their part in this work we include Mrs. Christine Helde of Strongfield, who was the first cook at the camp. Her kitchen was a tent and her stove was a coal and wood range. She worked long hours and gave unstintingly of her time to make meals every day for the campers.

Deserving a bouquet from Elbow are Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Joel, who have worked long and hard at the camp, Marie as kitchen supervisor for many years and Gordon as Camp manager. There have been many wonderful workers from the three congregations each year without whose aid the camp would not have been the success it has been.

Now, again the Camp will have to be moved for with the building of the great earth fill dam 12 miles upstream from Elbow, the present site will in a few years time be under water, water which will be dammed up to form a large lake with a shoreline of 475 miles. It will be with reluctance that this site will be left but a site near the lake has its appeal with the possibility of beautiful and extensive landscaping.

BY THE SASKATCHEWAN

When the sun has dipt to the westward,
And has reddend the sky with its glow,
When the shadows o'er the soft clouds have deepened,
And the twittering skylarks fly low,
Then I wend my way home o'er the prairie
With a yearning that never does fail
And the mists of the mighty Saskatchewan
Rise, to meet me at the end of the trail.

When dusk o'er the fields descends gently
And has covered the land with its peace,
And the stars march so closely above me
To the sweetest of all melodies,
Then a surging of rapture o'erflows me,
As I tread the last mile to my home
Where the mighty Saskatchewan rushes -
To lave the feet of the willows with foam.

There's a charm to the wide open spaces
Where the prairie runs to meet the sky,
And at eve when the dewdrops are falling,
From the blue dome of heaven on high
T'is then the trail like a thread of pure silver,
Leads me on to my home in the west
Where the moon o'er the mighty Saskatchewan
Rides high on a cloud at its crest.

So when day has gone over the ridges,
And the bar at the gate I have drawn
Starry-eyed my abode then awaits me,
And welcome floats to me in song -
Like a garment my troubles fall from me -
The cares of the day steal away,
By the shores of the mighty Saskatchewan
With my loved ones I am home to stay.

AGNES KROGAN,
Elbow, Sask.



Rev. L. Sogge



FIRST ROW:-

Elbow Bethel Lutheran Church Choir
First Post Office and Store

SECOND ROW:- (Left to Right)

Rev. G. Hope
Rev. W.M. Hagen
Myron Nelson, Organist

THIRD ROW:-

Main Street of Elbow in 1909



GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



FIRST ROW:

Mr. & Mrs. J. Joel - Golden Wedding

SECOND ROW:

Mr. & Mrs. C. Arneson and Mrs. C. Hagen
(First couple to be married by Rev. W.M. Hagen)

THIRD ROW:

Rev. & Mrs. Hagen and family

List of Pastors who have served the Congregation:

Rev. I. Hustvedt
Rev. W.M. Hagen
Rev. H.G. Storebo
Rev. I.O. Reitan
Rev. H.S. Quanbeck
Rev. K. Gjestfjeld
Rev. P. Overlid
Rev. S. Rue
Rev. C.I. Ostby
Rev. J. Loken
Rev. F.T. Dahle

*****XX*****

"We thank thee, God, for saints in times long past,
For fathers brave who laid foundations strong.

These pilgrims true, in living faith held fast,
And blessed the wilds with strains of sacred song.

They built their homes, they turned the virgin sod.
Fair temples raised to thee, thou living God."

*****XX*****

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8077
C2E3
K9

MAIN

BX 8077 C2 E3 K9 c.1

Krogan, Agnes, 1908-

And a church was built.

HSS



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